

[From the Albany Evening Journal.]

LITERARY NEWS.—TEMPERANCE HISTORY.—It has been a question of a good deal of interest and enquiry among the writers on Temperance, as to when, where, and by whom, the first Temperance Society was organized. It was at length pretty generally agreed, that it was at Moreau, in the State of New York, in 1808, by Dr. Billy J. Clark, and the Rev. Mr. Armstrong. It is accordingly so stated in Appleton's new Cyclopedia, in an article on Total Abstinence, written by Mr. Greeley. It seems, however, that a Society was established three years earlier (1805) at Allentown, New Jersey. Rev. E. Page, of Trenton, has lately forwarded the "Constitution Book" of that Society, (it was called the "Sober Society,") with the original fifty-eight signatures, to Prof. Amasa McCoy, of Albany, Corresponding Secretary of the World's Temperance Committee,\* and late Editor of the Prohibitionist, who has long been collecting materials for a full and authentic History of the Temperance Reform, from its origin to the present time, tracing its influence upon the habits, the social usages, the politics, and the legislation, of this and other countries.

We infer that the prospect of a history, from such a source, will be agreeable information to many friends of the cause. A distinguished and laborious collector of statistics on Temperance in New York, (the first who exposed the Distillery Milk Nuisance, in 1841,) writes to a friend in Albany, as follows: "Should I understand that it is Professor McCoy's purpose to prepare a full history of the Temperance Reform for publication? If such is his design, I should be happy to favor his object. The history of the Reform has never been written; and I would rejoice that it had been undertaken by one so eminently qualified to do it justice."

The most indifferent observer of this movement, or even an opponent of some of its later phases, feels some interest in a faithful record of its rise and progress, when he is told that it was computed twenty years ago, that it had saved a million of lives; and that so learned and eminent an authority as the late Dr. John C. Warren, of Boston, held in his writings, that it had added not less than one-sixth to the wealth and moral energy of Massachusetts. A year before his death, writing from Marshfield, Daniel Webster expressed himself as follows: "There can be no question that the Temperance movement in the United States has done infinite good."

\* THE WORLD'S TEMPERANCE COMMITTEE.

[Appointed at the Second World's Temperance Convention, New York, 6-9 September, 1853, to call future Conventions, "and devise such other measures, from time to time, as may be desirable for the cause of Temperance throughout the World."]

HON. NEAL DOW, Portland, Maine, *Chairman*.

HON. MALCOLM CAMERON, Port Sarula, Canada West.

HON. JOHN B. O'NEAL, Newberry, South Carolina.

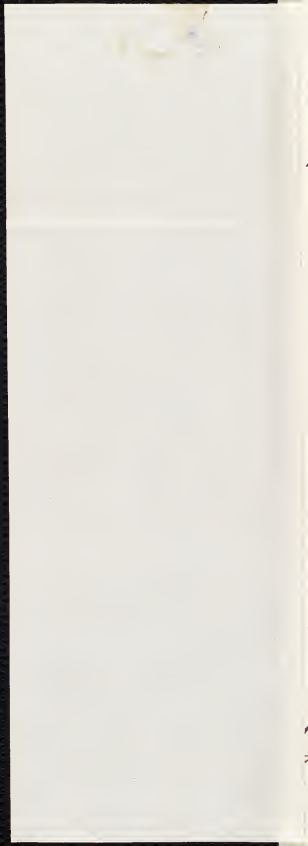
GEN. S. F. CARY, College Hill, Ohio.

CHRISTIAN KEENER, Esq., Baltimore, Maryland.

EDWARD C. DELAVAN, Esq., Albany, N. Y.

Prof. AMASA MCCOY, Albany, N. Y., *Corresponding Secretary*.

HON. E. CORNING, Albany, N. Y., *Treasurer*.



[Private and Confidential]

Albany, N. Y. 21 Sep. 1859

Wm Lloyd Garrison Esq

Dear Sir:

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If as Plume says,  
"History is the mistress of wisdom", history  
is sorely needed by the friends of Temperance.  
To help its friends — for there must be writers  
for Temperance long enough after we are  
dead — and to engage its enemies, I  
have conceived the project of treating  
it as a department of public and  
social history.

But oh how much of the  
materials for such a work has passed as  
much beyond reach, as "the years beyond  
the flood"; and of what survives, how  
scattered, and in what fragments!

There are collections, and museums,  
and cabinets — of shells, stones, relics,  
autographs, weapons, inventions — of every  
thing, but Temperance.

If there were a specimen of every  
publication on this subject, with the State  
Library at Albany, or anywhere else —  
even then it would be a great labor, to one who  
has plenty of other labor, to write a history such  
as I would consider worthy of the principle,

and the many lovers of their race who have watered them with their sweat and their tears. But in no ~~the~~ public library, in no private library is there one for a hundred, of Temperance publications.

Over as I am to travelling, and wedded as I am to the habit of the study, it seems indispensable that I should visit several places, and several persons. I have no copy of the Philanthropist for instance, and never saw a copy. I think you was once the Editor. I should like to see you in this relation, among other persons I have in mind in the city of Boston.

To invite the attention of many to whom the very name of Temperance is an aversion — who would say at once — "a dismal treatise" — "I have suff'd full of horrors" — to show that this story has ~~its~~ enough to give it variety and relief — its curiosity — its flourish of romance, poetry, and even of humour — I accepted the invitation of the Young Men's Association to lecture, provided they would accept this subject: "Curious and Comic Plans in the History of Temperance."

For the reasons ~~as~~ indicated, I should like to be invited to repeat

that lecture in Boston, as one of the  
Fraternity Course - which I understand  
to be a list of earnest students of  
some department of civilization -  
not necessarily agreeing on any question  
of religion or politics, but all  
devoted and successful laborers for  
some great principle, & in the way of  
social science.

I am aware that the Committee  
have arranged for the number of  
thirteen, and have announced  
~~that~~ thirteen. And I am aware that  
reformers as they are, they make  
make this just a sufficient reason  
for shutting out any other, however  
much they might sympathize with its  
objects.

If my lecture, and the objects  
of delivering it, sufficiently enlisted your  
sympathies, to induce you to request  
the Committee to invite me to make  
an addition to the list, I should  
expect that, from your position  
in this relation, they would do  
so.

How far this might be the case,

I can hardly venture to guess. My  
views and feelings in other matters,  
are certainly considerably at variance  
with yours; and even as to the project  
in behalf of Temperance which I  
have conceived - I could hardly expect  
that because so much feeling has  
grown upon me in the matter, that  
therefore you would enter into them also.  
After the views I have seen with Herald,  
by that great hearted man Gerritt  
Smith, ~~and~~ who I do not count certainly  
upon the sympathy of anyone, even a  
Philanthropist

I will only say, that if you should  
procure me this invitation, and so  
far favor an arduous undertaking, I  
shall feel it as a kindly and welcome  
service.

Life is so uncertain, ~~it~~ and so  
many other matters press upon me - for more  
to my interests - that I may not live to  
complete what I have undertaken. I hope  
however that my labor will be available to  
some one else who will use it for the great  
purpose of truth. In the meantime I shall  
feel very sensibly any such considerable  
aid as this would be, to in furtherance of my  
designs.

I remain, Dear Sir,

Respectfully Yours,

Amasa McCoy

I enclose a card, such as the Association have sometimes  
published; and which you may think it well to send to the Committee.